



## Coptic Orthodox Church of Liberia

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The Coptic Orthodox Church is situated a mile inland from the Liberian Atlantic coast. Unfortunately, this cornerstone of the Margibi community was marred by a harsh reality—the absence of safe and accessible water. The lack of this basic necessity posed significant challenges for both the churchgoers and the surrounding community. The residents came to rely on a hand-dug well several miles down the main road. Though the water source was shallow and easily accessible, it was unsealed and exposed to the elements. Each time the residents collected water, they tossed a small container into the well and hauled it to the surface with a rope, risking further contamination with each bucket of water.

Despite their circumstances, the church congregation came together during times of hardship. Yet, the lack of safe water at the church eclipsed their evangelism and gospel proclamation work. Without a safe and efficient water source, the church couldn't conduct baptisms, or host weddings and funerals. Instead of being a sanctuary for the community members, a school for the children, and a hub for community events, the Church stood empty much of the time.

A local missionary based at Coptic Orthodox Church shared his community's experience with the water crisis. He said, "We had no safe drinking water at all. We had to collect water from a hole we dug down the road. We've tried to dig a deeper well, but we didn't have the right tools. The school lessons no longer occurred because the students had to go find safe water elsewhere."



A man collects water from the church's shallow, hand-dug well.



The construction crew works to lay a concrete base for a new hand pump.

Access to safe water has not only quenched the physical thirst of the worshipers but has also revitalized the spirit of the church. With abundant safe water, the church has become a hub of vitality, fostering a

sense of health and well-being among its congregation. Now, the congregation can focus on their spiritual growth and communal activities without the burden of water scarcity. Additionally, the church has been able to expand its outreach programs, providing safe water to the surrounding community and thereby becoming a beacon of hope and support for those in need.

When asked whether life had changed in his community following the construction of the new safe water source at the church, a local missionary responded, “Oh yes! Our water crisis has completely stopped. We no longer have to bring water from far away sources. Now, students can drink water here.”



Children give thanks to the Lord for the gift of the new well!